

**U.S. SENATOR BYRON L. DORGAN**  
**OPENING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. SENATE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE**  
**HEARING**

**“Will The Bush Economic Plan Create Jobs?”**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) --- Following is the text of Senator Byron Dorgan’s (D-ND) opening statement at the Democratic Policy Committee hearing examining the question of whether the Bush Administration economic plan is likely to ever create new jobs:

Remarks by  
U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan, Chairman  
Senate Democratic Policy Committee Hearing

June 9, 2003  
Washington, DC

Last month, the nation’s employment rate jumped to 6.1 percent and the rate is expected to climb higher later this year. There are currently 9 million unemployed Americans seeking work. The job picture remains bleak. Harry Truman once said, “It’s a recession when your neighbor loses his job, it’s a depression when you lose your own.”

These new numbers make clear the need to continue to closely monitor the economy and the actual impact President Bush’s economic plan is having on joblessness.

The President’s economic plan has been in effect for two years. He just got a second round of the plan he put in place in 2001, big tax cuts primarily for the wealthy. The unemployment report last week -- and the experience that followed the President’s 2001 cuts, which also favored the wealthy -- suggests that cutting taxes for the wealthy may, in fact, not be the thing that cures all our problem, as the President has suggested.

He needs to keep his eye on the economic troubles facing our nation, and those of us in Congress do, too.

Since President Bush took office, the economy has lost some 3.1 million private sector jobs. There’s been a fifty percent increase in unemployment over this period. And the bulk of those lost jobs were good-paying manufacturing jobs.

Millions of Americans are anxiously asking whether the Administration’s economic plan, which has unfolded over the past two and one-half years, will ever create the jobs and opportunities that were promised.

I think the American people are not feeling terribly optimistic about the economic outlook, and this latest tax cut has not changed that. The economy has been moving along at a snail's pace for an extended period. This year, the country is facing the highest budget deficits ever. It is also facing the largest trade deficits ever. Frankly, it is hard to imagine how any business -- and the consumers it serves -- would be confident about this economy and the direction of current fiscal policy.

The Administration's plan for boosting the economy has focused almost entirely on providing massive, long-term tax cuts to the nation's top income earners -- every dollar which comes from government borrowing. Under the latest installment, someone earning \$1 million a year will get a \$93,000 tax cut in 2003 alone.

I believe, and others do as well, that if you invest in working families, this investment will percolate up through the economy and benefit everyone. But the basic philosophy of the Bush Administration and the majority in Congress has been if you throw enough money into the bank accounts of the nation's highest income earners that benefit will somehow trickle down to those at the very bottom of the economic ladder. This approach simply hasn't worked.

So far, their approach has done absolutely nothing to address our economic woes. The American people have a right to expect answers about why the economy continues to sputter along and whether the President's fiscal policies are ever going to deliver jobs. They also have a right to know if there are other policies that could do more to help inspire confidence in our economic future -- the kind of confidence that leads one to feel secure in his or her job and say I will buy a home, purchase a new car, take a trip or do something that will immediately provide some lift to the economy.

Today, we have a distinguished group of economic thinkers who I think can help us try to find some answers to these questions.